(ix) Import of coking coal is being resorted to fill the gap between demand and supply as these reserves are not available in sufficient quantity in the country.

(x) Import of good quality (low ash content) non-coking coal is also being resorted to fill the gap between demand and supply as low ash thermal reserves are not available in sufficient quantity in the country.

(xi) Coal India Limited has initiated steps for acquisition of coking coal blocks overseas to meet the additional demand of such coal in future.

Increasing the royalty rate

873. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to increase the royalty rates of coal by keeping in view the heavy demand of coal producing States;

(b) if so, the additional approximate royalty expected for each of the coal producing States; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to ensure that there is no increase in the prices of coal consuming industries products like steel, electricity and cement consequent upon increase in royalty rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (c) The Central Government constituted a Committee on 02.06.2005 to consider revision of rates of royalty on coal and lignite. The Committee submitted its report on 14.07.2006 after detailed deliberation with all stake holders. The Government is considering the report of the Committee. Revision, if any, would be made taking into consideration the interests of all stake holders including the coal-consuming industries such as steel, power and cement.